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Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/803,824

Examiner

Jerrold Johnson

Applicant(s)

HARLOCKER, CHRISTOPHER R.

Art Unit

3728

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to Examiner's Amendment resulting from a telephonic interview 12,13 April 2007.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 22-37.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☒ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date 18 March 2004
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Scott Foster on 13 April 2007.

The application has been amended as follows:

In the specification:

Per the Applicant's request, the specification has been amended as follows:

Page 2, last paragraph continuing onto page 3:

In accordance with a further feature of the invention, there is provided a carrying case providing privacy and light shade for a screen of a laptop computer. The carrying case includes a case bottom and a case top hingedly connected to each other along back portions thereof and movable between open and closed positions. Connection structure is disposed along front and side portions of the case for locking the front and side portions of the case top to front and side portions of the case bottom when the case is closed, the connection structure being releasable to permit the case top to move away from the case bottom to a location generally normal to the case bottom. A central panel is pivotally attached along a top edge of an inside surface of the case top, the

central panel being adapted to lie flush with the inside surface of the case top. First and second side panels are pivotally connected to the central panel, such that the side panels are adapted to lie flush with the central panel and adapted to be moved pivotally away from the central panel to positions generally normal to the central panel. Upon opening the case and moving the case top to the position generally normal to the case bottom, the central panel and the first and second side panels are pivotally movable inwardly from the case top to position the central panel substantially parallel with the case bottom. The first and second side panels are then movable downwardly and outwardly with free ends of the side panels being engageable with an inner surface of the case bottom, with the side panels in the positions generally normal to the central panel and generally normal to the case bottom. The case bottom, case top, central panel, and side panels thereby form a five sided cavity, a sixth side being open for viewing of the computer screen disposed within the cavity.

Page 3, last paragraph, continuing onto page 4:

In accordance with a further feature of the invention, there is provided in combination, a laptop computer and a carrying case therefor. The combination includes a laptop computer which, in turn, includes a keyboard portion and a viewing screen portion, the keyboard portion and the viewing screen portion being hingedly connected at rear edges thereof, with such that the viewing screen portion is movable to a position generally normal to the keyboard portion. The combination further includes a carrying case retaining the computer, the carrying case including top and bottom portions

movable between closed and open positions, and panels adapted to be disposed flush on an interior surface of the top portion and pivotally movable from the top portion to form an inverted u-shaped shroud resting on an interior surface of the bottom portion. The top and bottom portions and the panels are adapted to thereby form a five-sided cavity. The computer screen portion is movable in the cavity from a closed position to the position generally normal to the keyboard portion and proximate the case top portion. The shroud is open on a sixth side to permit viewing of the computer screen portion by an operator, while the shroud provides privacy and light shade.

Page 4, last paragraph, continuing onto page 5:

In accordance with a still further feature of the invention, there is provided in a method for operating a laptop computer with the screen thereof shielded for privacy and prevention of glare. The method includes the steps of providing in combination, a laptop computer and a carrying case therefor. The combination includes a laptop computer having a keyboard portion and a viewing screen portion. The keyboard portion and the viewing screen portion are hingedly connected at rear edges thereof, such that the viewing screen portion is movable to a position generally normal to the keyboard portion. The combination further includes a carrying case retaining the computer, the carrying case housing top and bottom portions movable between closed and open positions, and panels adapted to be disposed flush on an interior surface of the top portion and pivotally movable from the top portion to form an inverted u-shaped shroud resting on an interior surface of the bottom portion, the top and bottom portions

and the panels being adapted to thereby form a five-sided cavity. The method further includes the steps of opening the case and moving the top portion thereof to a position upstanding from the bottom portion, moving the panels from the position flush with the interior surface of the top portion to positions wherein a central panel extends substantial substantially parallel with the bottom portion, and side panels at either end of the central panel to positions generally normal to the bottom portion, whereby to form a shroud closed on five sides of the computer, and moving the computer screen portion away from the computer keyboard portion and toward the case top portion, the shroud being open on a sixth side to permit viewing of the computer screen portion by an operator, while the shroud provides privacy and protection from glare.

In the claims:

The claims have been amended as follows:

Claims 1-21 are cancelled.

New claims 22-37, as follow, are entered and allowed.

22. A carrying case providing privacy and light shade for a screen of a laptop computer disposed therein, the carrying case comprising top and bottom portions movable between closed and open positions, and panels adapted to be disposed flush on an interior surface of said case top portion and pivotally movable from said case top portion to form an inverted u-shaped shroud resting on an interior surface of said case bottom portion, wherein said panels comprise a central panel, and a side panel on each end of said central panel, a strip mounted on each side of said case bottom portion, each of said strips being adapted to lie flush with the interior surface of said case bottom portion, and adapted to be raised so as to stand on one lengthwise edge attached to said case bottom portion, each of said strips being provided with a first hermaphroditic fastener on one side thereof, and said side panels each having a strip at a free end thereof, said side panel strips each having a second hermaphroditic fastener thereon, the first and second hermaphroditic fasteners being engageable to lock the free ends of said side panels to said case bottom portion, said case top and bottom portions and said panels forming a five sided cavity, a sixth side being open to permit viewing of the screen of the computer.

23. The carrying case in accordance with claim 22 wherein said side panels are hingedly connected to the central panel ends.

24. The carrying case in accordance with claim 23 wherein said side panels are adapted to pivot inwardly to overlap each other.

25. The carrying case in accordance with claim 24 wherein said side panels when hingedly moved inwardly to overlap each other, overlie said central panel, said side panels being closer to said case top portion than said central panel.

26. The carrying case in accordance with claim 22 wherein at least one of said case top and bottom portions is provided with a loop handle.

27. The carrying case in accordance with claim 22 wherein said side panels are each provided with an edge strip disposed along an outboard surface thereof on an edge proximate the case top portion when the side panels are in their cavity forming positions, and the case top portion is provided with side strips on the interior thereof, each side strip proximate an end edge of the case top portion, the strips having hermaphroditic fastener material thereon, and the side panel edge strips are engageable with the case top portion side strips to lock the side panel outboard surface edges to the case top portion end edges.

28. The carrying case in accordance with claim 27 wherein the fasteners are engaged and separated by manually pressing two of the fasteners together and pulling two of the fasteners apart, respectively.

29. The carrying case in accordance with claim 22 wherein said top and bottom portions are each provided with a lip portion upstanding along the free front edge and side edge portions thereof, the lip portion being provided with releasable connection structure for locking the lip portions together to lock said case top portion to said case bottom portion to effect locking closure of the case.

30. The carrying case in accordance with claim 29 wherein the releasable connection structure comprises at least one zipper.

31. The carrying case in accordance with claim 22 wherein interior surfaces of said shroud panels are of a non-glare, non-reflective, material.

32. The carrying case in accordance with claim 25 wherein said top and bottom portions are internally of generally stiff construction, covered externally with a soft outer material.

33. The carrying case in accordance with claim 32 wherein said panels are internally of generally stiff construction, covered by a non-glare, non-reflective matt material.

34. The carrying case in accordance with claim 23 wherein said side panels are connected to said central panel by living hinges and said side panels and said central panel are generally stiff.

35. A carrying case providing privacy and light shade for a screen of a laptop computer disposed therein, the carrying case comprising:

a case bottom and a case top hingedly connected to each other along back portions thereof and movable between open and closed positions;

connection structure disposed along outer portions of the case for locking said case top to said case bottom when the case is closed, said connection structure being releasable to permit said case top to move away from said case bottom to a location generally normal to said case bottom;

a central panel pivotally attached along a top edge thereof to an inside surface of said case top, said central panel being adapted to lie flush with an inside surface of the case top;

first and second side panels pivotally connected to said central panel, such that said side panels are adapted to lie flush with said central panel and adapted to be moved pivotally away from said central panel to positions generally normal to said central panel;

whereby upon opening the case and moving said case top to the position generally normal to said case bottom, said central panel and said first and second side panels are pivotally movable inwardly from said case top to position said central panel substantially parallel with said case bottom;

the first and second side panels being then movable downwardly and outwardly with free ends of said side panels being engageable with an inner surface of said case bottom with said side panels in positions generally normal to said central panel and normal to said case bottom;

said case bottom, said case top, said central panel, and said side panels thereby forming a five sided cavity, a sixth side being open for viewing the computer screen disposed within the cavity;

wherein said case bottom and top and said side panels are provided with hermaphroditic fasteners engageable to fasten a first side panel to a first end of said case bottom, a second side panel to a second end of said case bottom, a rear edge of said first side panel to a first end portion of said case top, and a rear edge of said second side panel to a second end portion of said case top, whereby to lock the case bottom and top and said side panels together forming the five sided cavity; and

wherein the fasteners include a strip mounted on each side of said case bottom portion, each of said strips being adapted to lie flush with the interior of said case bottom portion, and adapted to be raised so as to stand on one lengthwise edge attached to said case bottom portion.

36. The carrying case in accordance with claim 35 wherein said side panels are attached to said central panel by living hinges and said side and central panels are of generally stiff construction.

37. In combination, a lap top computer and a carrying case therefor, the combination comprising:

a laptop computer comprising:

a keyboard portion;

a viewing screen portion;

the keyboard portion and the viewing screen portion being hingedly connected at rear edges thereof, such that the viewing screen portion is movable to a position upstanding from the keyboard portion; and

a carrying case retaining said computer, said carrying case comprising:

top and bottom portions movable between closed and open positions; and panels adapted to be disposed flush on an interior surface of said top portion and pivotally movable from said top portion to form an inverted u-shaped shroud resting on an interior surface of said bottom portion, said top and bottom portions and said panels being adapted to thereby form a five-sided cavity;

wherein said case bottom and top and said side panels are provided with hermaphroditic fasteners engageable to fasten a first side panel to a first end of said case bottom, a second side panel to a second end of said case bottom, a rear edge of said first side panel to a first end portion of said case top, and a rear edge of said second side panel to a second end portion of said case top, whereby to lock the case bottom and top and said side panels together forming the five sided cavity;

wherein the fasteners include a strip mounted on each side of said case bottom portion, each of said strips being adapted to lie flush with the interior of said case bottom portion, and adapted to be raised so as to stand on one lengthwise edge attached to said case bottom portion; said computer screen portion being movable in the cavity from a closed position to the position upstanding from said keyboard portion and proximate said case top portion; and the shroud being open on a sixth side to permit viewing of said computer screen portion by an operator, while the shroud provides privacy and light shade.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Reasons for allowance/Interview Summary of 12,13 April 2007:

In view of the base reference, Dillon US 5,325,970, and the teaching references, Heiman US 2003/0223119 (elements 70, para. [0042]) and Carlton et al. US 5,762,250 (elements 192, col. 16, lines 12-25), the Examiner recommended the incorporation of the limitations of the originally filed claim 6 to the first three independent claims as were originally set forth. Claim 6 was directed to a particular structure of a strip attached to the carrying case that is adapted to lie flush with the interior of the case bottom and adapted to be raised so as to stand on one lengthwise edge attached to the case bottom. There is no teaching for such a structure for securing a shade to a case. The two most relevant references for teaching a structure to accomplish this purpose, Heiman US 2003/0223119 (elements 70, para. [0042]) and Carlton et al. US 5,762,250 (elements 192, col. 16, lines 12-25), both merely teach static securement elements mounted to the case bottom. Accordingly, claims 21-37 define over the prior art of record.

Faxes of DRAFT submissions dated 12 and 13 April 2007 are included for insertion into the record. The content of the Specification Amendments of the Draft Fax submission dated 12 April 2007, and the content of the Claim Amendments of the Draft Fax submission dated 13 April 2007 are incorporated into this Examiner's Amendment.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jerrold Johnson whose telephone number is 571-272-7141. The examiner can normally be reached on 9:30 to 6:00 M-F.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mickey Yu can be reached on 571-272-4562. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.


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FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION COVER PAGE

NO. OF PAGES (Including cover page) = 15

TO: Examiner J. Johnson
U.S.P.T.O.

DATE: April 12, 2007

FROM: Scott R. Foster

SUBJECT: U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/803,824
Our Ref.: HARL-3

Draft

FAX NO.: 1-571-273-7141

Dear Mr. Johnson:

Herewith please find proposed amendments directed to putting this application in order for allowance, and to clean up some minor errors.

This follows our telephone conversation of April 11, 2007.

The information contained in this document is intended only for the personal and confidential use of the designated recipient named above. This transmission may be a confidential attorney-client communication or may otherwise be privileged or confidential. If you have received this transmission in error, any use, dissemination, distribution or copying of any information contained therein is strictly prohibited.

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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of: Christopher R. Harlocker
Serial No.: 10/803,824
Filing Date: 03/18/2004
For: CARRYING CASE PROVIDING PRIVACY AND
LIGHT SHADE FOR A SCREEN OF A LAPTOP
COMPONENTS
Group Art Unit: 3728
Examiner: Jerrold Johnson
Attorney's Docket No.: HARL-3

Commissioner For Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

DRAFT PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Please amend the above-identified application as follows:

SPECIFICATION AMENDMENTS

Page 2, last paragraph continuing onto page 3:

In accordance with a further feature of the invention, there is provided a carrying case providing privacy and light shade for a screen of a laptop computer. The carrying case includes a case bottom and a case top hingedly connected to each other along back portions thereof and movable between open and closed positions. Connection structure is disposed along front and side portions of the case for locking the front and side portions of the case top to front and side portions of the case bottom when the case is closed, the connection structure being releasable to permit the case top to move away from the case bottom to a location generally normal to the case bottom. A central panel is pivotally attached along a top edge of an inside surface of the case top, the central panel being adapted to lie flush with the inside surface of the case top. First and second side panels are pivotally connected to the central panel, such that the side panels are adapted to lie flush with the central panel and adapted to be moved pivotally away from the central panel to positions generally normal to the central panel. Upon opening the case and moving the case top to the position generally normal to the case bottom, the central panel and the first and second side panels are pivotally movable inwardly from the case top to position the central panel substantially parallel with the case bottom. The first and second side panels are then movable downwardly and outwardly with free ends of the side panels being engageable with an inner surface of the case bottom, with the side panels in the positions generally normal to the central panel and generally normal to the case bottom. The case bottom, case top, central

panel, and side panels thereby form a five sided cavity, a sixth side being open for viewing of the computer screen disposed within the cavity.

Page 3, last paragraph, continuing onto page 4:

In accordance with a further feature of the invention, there is provided in combination, a laptop computer and a carrying case therefor. The combination includes a laptop computer which, in turn, includes a keyboard portion and a viewing screen portion, the keyboard portion and the viewing screen portion being hingedly connected at rear edges thereof, with such that the viewing screen portion is movable to a position generally normal to the keyboard portion. The combination further includes a carrying case retaining the computer, the carrying case including top and bottom portions movable between closed and open positions, and panels adapted to be disposed flush on an interior surface of the top portion and pivotally movable from the top portion to form an inverted u-shaped shroud resting on an interior surface of the bottom portion. The top and bottom portions and the panels are adapted to thereby form a five-sided cavity. The computer screen portion is movable in the cavity from a closed position to the position generally normal to the keyboard portion and proximate the case top portion. The shroud is open on a sixth side to permit viewing of the computer screen portion by an operator, while the shroud provides privacy and light shade.

Page 4, last paragraph, continuing onto page 5:

In accordance with a still further feature of the invention, there is provided in a method for operating a laptop computer with the screen thereof shielded for privacy and prevention of glare. The method includes the steps of providing in combination, a laptop computer and a carrying case therefor. The combination includes a laptop computer having a keyboard portion and a viewing screen portion. The keyboard portion and the viewing screen portion are hingedly connected at rear edges thereof, such that the viewing screen portion is movable to a position generally normal to the keyboard portion. The combination further includes a carrying case retaining the computer, the carrying case housing top and bottom portions movable between closed and open positions, and panels adapted to be disposed flush on an interior surface of the top portion and pivotally movable from the top portion to form an inverted u-shaped shroud resting on an interior surface of the bottom portion, the top and bottom portions and the panels being adapted to thereby form a five-sided cavity. The method further includes the steps of opening the case and moving the top portion thereof to a position upstanding from the bottom portion, moving the panels from the position flush with the interior surface of the top portion to positions wherein a central panel extends ~~substantial~~ substantially parallel with the bottom portion, and side panels at either end of the central panel to positions generally normal to the bottom portion, whereby to form a shroud closed on five sides of the computer, and moving the computer screen portion away from the computer keyboard portion and toward the case top portion, the shroud

being open on a sixth side to permit viewing of the computer screen portion by an operator, while the shroud provides privacy and protection from glare.

CLAM AMENDMENTS

What is claimed is:

1. (currently amended) A carrying case providing privacy and light shade for a screen of a laptop computer disposed therein, the carrying case comprising top and bottom portions movable between closed and open positions, and panels adapted to be disposed flush on an interior surface of said case top portion and pivotally movable from said case top portion to form an inverted u-shaped shroud resting on an interior surface of said case bottom portion, wherein said panels comprise a central panel, and a side panel on each end of said central panel, a strip mounted on each side of said case bottom portion, each of said strips being adapted to lie flush with the interior of said case bottom portion, and adapted to be raised so as to stand on one lengthwise edge attached to said case bottom portion, each of said strips being provided with a first hermaphroditic fastener on one side thereof, and said side panels each having a strip at a free end thereof, said side panel strips each having a second hermaphroditic fastener thereon, the first and second hermaphroditic fasteners being engageable to lock the free ends of said side panels to said case bottom portion, said case top and bottom portions and the said panels forming a five sided cavity, a sixth side being open to permit viewing of the screen of the computer.

2. (canceled)

3. (currently amended) The carrying case in accordance with claim 2 1 wherein said side panels are hingedly connected to said central panel ends.

4. (previously presented) The carrying case in accordance with claim 3 wherein said side panels are adapted to pivot inwardly to overlap each other.

5. (previously presented) The carrying case in accordance with claim 4 wherein said side panels when hingedly moved inwardly to overlap each other, overlie said central panel, said side panels being closer to said case top portion than said central panel.

6. (canceled)

7. (previously presented) The carrying case in accordance with claim 1 wherein at least one of said case top and bottom portions is provided with a loop handle.

8. (currently amended) The carrying case in accordance with claim 6 1 wherein said side panels are each provided with an edge strip disposed along an outboard surface thereof on an edge proximate the case top portion when the side panels are in their cavity forming positions, and the case top portion is provided with side strips on the interior thereof, each side strip proximate an end edge of the case top portion, the strips having hermaphroditic fastener material thereon, and the side panel edge strips are engageable with the case top portion side strips to lock the side panel outboard surface edges to the case top portion end edges.

9. (previously presented) The carrying case in accordance with claim 8 wherein the fasteners are engaged and separated by manually pressing two of the fasteners together and pulling two of the fasteners apart, respectively.

10. (currently amended) The carrying case in accordance with claim 1 wherein said top and bottom portions are each provided with a lip portion upstanding along the free front edge and side edge portions thereof, the lip portion being provided with releasable connection structure for locking the lip portions together to lock the said case top portion to the said case bottom portion to effect locking closure of the case.

11. (previously presented) The carrying case in accordance with claim 10 wherein the releasable connection structure comprises at least one zipper.

12. (previously presented) The carrying case in accordance with claim 5 wherein interior surfaces of said shroud top and bottom portions and panels are of a non-glare, non-reflective, material.

13. (previously presented) The carrying case in accordance with claim 5 wherein said top and bottom portions are internally of generally stiff construction, covered externally with a soft outer material.

14. (previously presented) The carrying case in accordance with claim 13 wherein said panels are internally of generally stiff construction, covered by a non-glare, non-reflective matt material.

15. (currently amended) The carrying case in accordance with claim 3 wherein said side panels are connected to said central panel by living hinges and said side panels are said central panel are and generally stiff.

16. (currently amended) A carrying case providing privacy and light shade for a screen of a laptop computer disposed therein the carrying case comprising:

a case bottom and a case top hingedly connected to each other along back portions thereof and movable between open and closed positions;

connection structure disposed along either outer portions of the case for locking said case top to said case bottom when the case is closed, said connection structure being releasable to permit said case top to move away from the said case bottom to a location generally normal to said case bottom;

a central panel pivotally attached along a top edge thereof to an inside surface of said case top, said central panel being adapted to lie flush with an inside surface of said case top;

first and second side panels pivotally connected to said central panel, such that said side panels are adapted to lie flush with said central panel and adapted to be moved pivotally away from said central panel to positions generally normal to said central panel;

such that upon opening the case and moving said case top to the position generally normal to said case bottom, said central panel and said first and second side panels are pivotally movable inwardly from main said case top to position said central panel substantially parallel with said case bottom;

the first and second side panels being then movable downwardly and outwardly with free ends of said side panels being engageable with an inner surface of said case bottom with said side panels in positions generally normal to said central panel and normal to said case bottom;

said case bottom, said case top, said central panel, and said side panels thereby forming a five sided cavity, a sixth side being open for viewing the computer screen disposed within the cavity; wherein said case bottom and top and said side panels are provided with hermaphroditic fasteners engageable to fasten a first side panel to a first end of said case bottom, a second side panel to a second end of said case bottom, a rear edge of said first side panel to a first end portion of said case top, and a rear edge of said second side panel to a second end portion of said case top, whereby to lock the case bottom and top and said side panels together forming the five sided cavity.

17. (canceled)

18. (previously presented) The carrying case in accordance with claim 16 wherein said side panels are attached to said central panel by living hinges and said side and central panels are of generally stiff construction.

19. (currently amended) In combination, a lap top computer and a carrying case therefor, the combination comprising:

a laptop computer comprising:

a keyboard portion; and

a viewing screen portion;

the keyboard portion and the viewing screen portion being hingedly connected at rear edges thereof, such that the viewing screen portion is movable to a position upstanding from the keyboard portion; and

a carrying case retaining said computer, said carrying case comprising:

top and bottom portions movable between closed and open positions; and panels adapted to be disposed flush on an interior surface of said top portion and pivotally movable from said top portion to form an inverted u-shaped shroud resting on an interior surface of the said bottom portion; said top and bottom portions and said panels being adapted to thereby form a five-sided cavity, wherein said case bottom and top and said side panels are provided with hermaphroditic fasteners engageable to fasten a first side panel to a first end of said case bottom, a second side panel to a second end of said case bottom, a rear edge of said first side panel to a first end portion of said case top, and a rear edge of said second side panel to a second end portion of said case top, whereby to lock the case bottom and top and said side panels together forming the five sided cavity;

said computer screen portion being movable in the cavity from a closed position to the position upstanding from said keyboard portion and proximate said case top portion;

the shroud being open on a sixth side to permit viewing of said computer screen portion by an operator, while the shroud provides privacy and light shade.

20. (currently amended) A method for operating a laptop computer with the screen thereof shielded for privacy and prevention of glare, the method comprising the steps of:

providing in combination a laptop computer and a carrying case therefor, the combination comprising:

a laptop computer comprising;

a keyboard portion; and

a viewing screen portion;

the keyboard portion and the viewing screen portion being hingedly connected at rear edges thereof, such that the viewing screen portion is movable to a position upstanding from the keyboard portions; and

a carrying case retaining the computer, said carrying case comprising:

top and bottom portions movable between closed and open positions; and panels adapted to be disposed flush on an ~~interim~~ interior surface of said top portion and pivotally movable from said top portion to form an inverted u-shaped shroud resting on an interior surface of said bottom portion, said top and bottom portions and said panels being adapted to thereby form a

five-sided cavity, wherein said case bottom and top and said side panels are provided with hermaphroditic fasteners engageable to fasten a first side panel to a first end of said case bottom, a second side panel to a second end of said case bottom, a rear edge of said first side panel to a first end portion of said case top, and a rear edge of said second side panel to a second end portion of said case top, whereby to lock the case bottom and top and said side panels together forming the five sided cavity;

opening the case and moving the top portion thereof to a position upstanding from the bottom portion;

moving the panels from the position flush with the interior surface of the top portion to positions wherein a central panel extends substantially parallel with the bottom portion, and side panels at either end of the central panel to positions generally normal to the bottom portion;

whereby to form a shroud closed on five sides of the computer; and

moving the computer screen portion away from the computer keyboard portion and toward the case top portion;

the shroud being open on a sixth side to permit viewing of the computer screen portion by an operator, while the shroud provides privacy and light shade; and

manipulating the keyboard portion of the computer.

21. (currently amended) A shield for a carrying case for a laptop computer, the shield comprising:

a panel assembly for disposition in the carrying case, the panel assembly comprising a central panel and a side panel on each end of said central panel;

said side panels being hingedly connected to said central panel ends;

said side panels being adapted to pivot inwardly to overlap each other and to lie flush against said central panel;

each of said side panels having ~~an end~~ a fastener strip at a free end thereof adapted to lockingly engage a bottom portion of the carrying case;

each of said side panels having an edge fastener strip disposed along a rearward edge thereof adapted to lockingly engage a top portion of the carrying case;

wherein the carrying case top and bottom portions and the panel assembly central and side panels form a five-sided cavity, a sixth side being open to permit viewing of a screen of a computer disposed in the carrying case.

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TO: Examiner J. Johnson
U.S.P.T.O.

DATE: April 13, 2007

FROM: Scott R. Foster

SUBJECT: U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/803,824
Our Ref.: HARL-3

Draft

FAX NO.: 1-571-273-7141

Dear Mr. Johnson:

Herewith please find suggested claims as discussed.

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SUGGESTED CLAIMS

22. A carrying case providing privacy and light shade for a screen of a laptop computer disposed therein, the carrying case comprising top and bottom portions movable between closed and open positions, and panels adapted to be disposed flush on an interior surface of said case top portion and pivotally movable from said case top portion to form an inverted u-shaped shroud resting on an interior surface of said case bottom portion, wherein said panels comprise a central panel, and a side panel on each end of said central panel, a strip mounted on each side of said case bottom portion, each of said strips being adapted to lie flush with the interior surface of said case bottom portion, and adapted to be raised so as to stand on one lengthwise edge attached to said case bottom portion, each of said strips being provided with a first hermaphroditic fastener on one side thereof, and said side panels each having a strip at a free end thereof, said side panel strips each having a second hermaphroditic fastener thereon, the first and second hermaphroditic fasteners being engageable to lock the free ends of said side panels to said case bottom portion, said case top and bottom portions and said panels forming a five sided cavity, a sixth side being open to permit viewing of the screen of the computer.

23. The carrying case in accordance with claim 22 wherein said side panels are hingedly connected to the central panel ends.

24. The carrying case in accordance with claim 23 wherein said side panels are adapted to pivot inwardly to overlap each other.

25. The carrying case in accordance with claim 24 wherein said side panels when hingedly moved inwardly to overlap each other, overlie said central panel, said side panels being closer to said case top portion than said central panel.

26. The carrying case in accordance with claim 22 wherein at least one of said case top and bottom portions is provided with a loop handle.

27. The carrying case in accordance with claim 22 wherein said side panels are each provided with an edge strip disposed along an outboard surface thereof on an edge proximate the case top portion when the side panels are in their cavity forming positions, and the case top portion is provided with side strips on the interior thereof, each side strip proximate an end edge of the case top portion, the strips having hermaphroditic fastener material thereon, and the side panel edge strips are engageable with the case top portion side strips to lock the side panel outboard surface edges to the case top portion end edges.

28. The carrying case in accordance with claim 27 wherein the fasteners are engaged and separated by manually pressing two of the fasteners together and pulling two of the fasteners apart, respectively.

29. The carrying case in accordance with claim 22 wherein said top and bottom portions are each provided with a lip portion upstanding along the free front edge and side edge portions thereof, the lip portion being provided with releasable connection structure for locking the lip portions together to lock said case top portion to said case bottom portion to effect locking closure of the case.

30. The carrying case in accordance with claim 29 wherein the releasable connection structure comprises at least one zipper.

31. The carrying case in accordance with claim 22 wherein interior surfaces of said shroud panels are of a non-glare, non-reflective, material.

32. The carrying case in accordance with claim 25 wherein said top and bottom portions are internally of generally stiff construction, covered externally with a soft outer material.

33. The carrying case in accordance with claim 32 wherein said panels are internally of generally stiff construction, covered by a non-glare, non-reflective matt material.

34. The carrying case in accordance with claim 23 wherein said side panels are connected to said central panel by living hinges and said side panels and said central panel are generally stiff.

35. A carrying case providing privacy and light shade for a screen of a laptop computer disposed therein, the carrying case comprising:

a case bottom and a case top hingedly connected to each other along back portions thereof and movable between open and closed positions;

connection structure disposed along outer portions of the case for locking said case top to said case bottom when the case is closed, said connection structure being releasable to permit said case top to move away from said case bottom to a location generally normal to said case bottom;

a central panel pivotally attached along a top edge thereof to an inside surface of said case top, said central panel being adapted to lie flush with an inside surface of the case top;

first and second side panels pivotally connected to said central panel, such that said side panels are adapted to lie flush with said central panel and adapted to be moved pivotally away from said central panel to positions generally normal to said central panel;

whereby upon opening the case and moving said case top to the position generally normal to said case bottom, said central panel and said first and second side panels are pivotally movable inwardly from said case top to position said central panel substantially parallel with said case bottom;

the first and second side panels being then movable downwardly and outwardly with free ends of said side panels being engageable with an inner surface of said case bottom with said side panels in positions generally normal to said central panel and normal to said case bottom;

said case bottom, said case top, said central panel, and said side panels thereby forming a five sided cavity, a sixth side being open for viewing the computer screen disposed within the cavity;

wherein said case bottom and top and said side panels are provided with hermaphroditic fasteners engageable to fasten a first side panel to a first end of said case bottom, a second side panel to a second end of said case bottom, a rear edge of said first side panel to a first end portion of said case top, and a rear edge of said second side panel to a second end portion of said case top, whereby to lock the case bottom and top and said side panels together forming the five sided cavity; and

wherein the fasteners include a strip mounted on each side of said case bottom portion, each of said strips being adapted to lie flush with the interior of said case bottom portion, and adapted to be raised so as to stand on one lengthwise edge attached to said case bottom portion.

36. The carrying case in accordance with claim 35 wherein said side panels are attached to said central panel by living hinges and said side and central panels are of generally stiff construction.

37. In combination, a lap top computer and a carrying case therefor, the combination comprising:

a laptop computer comprising:

a keyboard portion;

a viewing screen portion;

the keyboard portion and the viewing screen portion being hingedly connected at rear edges thereof, such that the viewing screen portion is movable to a position upstanding from the keyboard portion; and

a carrying case retaining said computer, said carrying case comprising:

- top and bottom portions movable between closed and open positions; and
- panels adapted to be disposed flush on an interior surface of said top portion and pivotally movable from said top portion to form an inverted u-shaped shroud resting on an interior surface of said bottom portion, said top and bottom portions and said panels being adapted to thereby form a five-sided cavity;
- wherein said case bottom and top and said side panels are provided with hermaphroditic fasteners engageable to fasten a first side panel to a first end of said case bottom, a second side panel to a second end of said case bottom, a rear edge of said first side panel to a first end portion of said case top, and a rear edge of said second side panel to a second end portion of said case top, whereby to lock the case bottom and top and said side panels together forming the five sided cavity;
- wherein the fasteners include a strip mounted on each side of said case bottom portion, each of said strips being adapted to lie flush with the interior of said case bottom portion, and adapted to be raised so as to stand on one lengthwise edge attached to said case bottom portion;

said computer screen portion being movable in the cavity from a closed position to the position upstanding from said keyboard portion and proximate said case top portion; and
the shroud being open on a sixth side to permit viewing of said computer screen portion by an operator, while the shroud provides privacy and light shade.